

Examiner's Amendment/Reasons for Allowance

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

In the Claims

2. Claim 25, line 13, insert "." (period) after "connections".

In the Specification

3. Page 1, line 5, delete "Number _____" and insert –Number 10/699,283--4.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment "***In the Claims***" was given in a telephone interview with Robert M. Trepp on May 19, 2008. The change to the specification was not discussed at that time.

Reasons for Allowance

4. Claim 25 is considered allowable since when reading the claims in light of the specification (MPEP § 211.01) or In re Sneed, 710 F.2d 1544, 1548, 218 USPQ 385, 388 (Fed. Cir. 1983), none of the references of record alone or in combination disclose or suggest the combination of limitations specified in independent claim 25, including "node-by-node" (supported at e. g., page 5, line 10), "perturbations" (supported at e. g., page 5, line 10), "similarity measure" (supported at e. g., page 5, line 11), "order" (supported at e. g., page 6, lines 1-2), and "false correlations" (supported at e. g., page

8, line 20) wherein reconstruction of supply chain networks are achieved by monitoring node output, computing similarity measures including determining order corresponding to a minimum number of individual connections needed to traverse the path between nodes and the order is used to reduce false correlations by distinguishing first order connections.

The closest prior art (Schenkel el al., USPN 5,933,416) teaches a method determining the topology of a network of objects by monitoring traffic out of a device and monitoring traffic into a device. Schenkel does not teach putative connections based on similarity measure wherein each of the connections needed to traverse from the node to the one or more other nodes wherein the order is used to reduce false correlations by distinguishing first order connections from all other order connections.

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Correspondence Information

6. Any inquiry concerning this information or related to the subject disclosure should be directed to the Primary Examiner, Joseph P. Hirl, whose telephone number is (571) 272-3685. The Examiner can be reached on Monday – Thursday from 5:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

As detailed in MPEP 502.03, communications via Internet e-mail are at the discretion of the applicant. Without a written authorization by applicant recorded in the applicant's file, the USPTO will not respond via e-mail to any Internet correspondence which contains information subject to the confidentiality requirement as set forth in 35 U.S.C. 122. A paper copy of such correspondence will be placed in the appropriate patent application. The following is an example authorization which may be used by the applicant:

Notwithstanding the lack of security with Internet Communications, I hereby authorize the USPTO to communicate with me concerning any subject matter related to the instant application by e-mail. I understand that a copy of such communications related to formal submissions will be made of record in the applications file.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, David R. Vincent can be reached at (571) 272-3080. Any response to this office action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,
Washington, D. C. 20231;

Hand delivered to:

Receptionist,
Customer Service Window,
Randolph Building,
401 Dulany Street,
Alexandria, Virginia 22313,
(located on the first floor of the south side of the Randolph Building);

or faxed to:

(571) 273-8300 (for formal communications intended for entry.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have any questions on access to Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll free).

/Joseph P. Hirl/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2129
May 20, 2008